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FOR S/WCI:CWILLIAMSON, MLAVINE, SMUBANGU, EUR/PGI:ANORMAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/02/2017

TAGS: PTER PINR LH

SUBJECT: DETAINEE RESETTLEMENT CABLES FOLLOW-UP INFORMATION

REF: A) STATE 54924 B) VILNIUS 247

Classified By: Pol/Econ Chief Rebecca Dunham for Reasons 1.4  
(b) and (d)

¶1. (S) Summary: Lithuania remains interested in pursuing detainee resettlement, but is still waiting for answers from the USG before it can proceed. This message provides answers to questions posed in ref A. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) As requested ref A, post designates Michael Dickerson as POC for Guantanamo Bay detainee resettlement issues in Lithuania. Mr. Dickerson's office phone is (370) 5 266-5547, e-mail dickersonml@state.gov, and classified e-mail is dickersonml@state.sgov.gov.

¶3. (C) As mentioned ref B, Lithuania has no significant minorities of Egyptians, Mauritanians, Somalis, Palestinians, Sudanese, or Chinese Uighurs. The latest Lithuanian census data shows 3 or fewer of each living in Lithuania.

¶4. (C) Lithuania does, however, have 1,631 Uzbeks, according to the most recent census. A representative of a local NGO representing the Uzbek community, Kuisin-oi Zujiene, told us that there are some small Uzbek communities in Kaunas, Klaipeda, and Mazeikiai. These communities maintain some Uzbek customs, traditions, and culture. Mrs. Zujiene told us that many Uzbeks, however, have intermarried and assimilated into ethnically Lithuanian communities.

¶5. (C) Presidential advisor Halina Kobeckaite, who specializes in minority issues, asserted to us on May 2 that nearly all of the Uzbeks living in Lithuania were intermarried, and that although there are three NGOs representing the Uzbek community, none of them is very active. Kobeckaite also told us that there are only four mosques in Lithuania. They are located in Kaunas, Raizai, Butrimonys, and Keturiadasimt Totoriu; there is also a small Muslim prayer room in Vilnius.

¶6. (C) Lithuania does not have sufficiently strong political, economic, historic or other ties to third countries that might serve as alternate destinations for specific detainees, and that might enable it to work with the USG to persuade third countries to accept detainees.

¶7. (S) MFA Americas Director Jonas Paslauskas asked us May 2 about the status of USG efforts to send a team to provide more in-depth information on GOL options in assuming responsibility for a small group of detainees. The Lithuanians agreed in principle to this request from Washington on April 3 (ref B).

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